



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

George Washington Birthplace National Monument
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George Washington Birthplace - News Release

Release date: Immediate

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Date: July 30, 2013

Rappahannocks to Participate in Birthplace American Indian Heritage Day

On Saturday August 17 from 11-3 the grounds of George Washington Birthplace National Monument will come alive with the dancing and drumming of the people who can trace their ancestry to the times long before the Washington family even heard of a place that was to be called Virginia.

Member of the Rappahannock tribe, one of 11 tribes recognized by Virginia, will be demonstrating dancing and drumming as the focus of the Birthplace's celebration of American Indian Heritage Day. Topahanoke (Algonquian for *the town on the rise and fall of water*, modern day Tappahannock) was their capital in 1608 when Captain John Smith mapped 14 Rappahannock villages in what would later be known as the Northern Neck of Virginia. By quick action and determination, remnants of the tribe are living to this day, surviving the genocide inflicted by land hungry Europeans shortly after contact.

"George Washington's great-grandfather John was known by the local Algonquians as *Village Destroyer*," explains acting Superintendent John Storke. "We are not hosting this event," he continues, "as a way of honoring the checkered past of our ancestors, but as a recognition of the Algonquian



Rappahannock Dancers

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people who made a home for centuries on the place where the greatest fighter for the freedoms all Americans would eventually enjoy was born in 1732.

More information on the Rappahannocks, their cultural center and museum near St. Stephen's Church VA and Chief G. Anne Richardson can be seen at www.rappahannocktribe.org.

Admission is not charged at George Washington Birthplace National Monument, and there will be no cost for the event.

Food will be available for purchase during the event.

George Washington Birthplace is located at 1732 Popes Creek Road, Colonial Beach, VA 22443. It is on Route 204, 2 miles from the intersection of State Route 3, 38 miles east of

Fredericksburg VA and 11 miles west of Montross VA. For more information call 804 224 1732, check us out on Facebook or Twitter or visit the web at www.nps.gov/gewa



Rappahannock Drummers